

In the Claims:

Claims 1-7 (Previously Canceled).

8. (Currently Amended) A method for preparation of dendritic cells having at least two cell surface markers selected from the group consisting of CD1a, HLA-DR and CD86, ~~produced by~~ comprising (a) contacting hematopoietic stem or progenitor cells with IL-18 sufficient to unduce maturation of said hematopoietic stem or progenitor cells into dendritic cells.
9. (Currently Amended) A method for providing a dendritic cell preparation according to produced by a method of claim 8 ~~produced further~~ comprising (b) by contacting the hematopoietic stem or progenitor cells with a molecule selected from the group consisting of flt3-ligand, GM-CSF, IL-4, TNF- α , IL-3, c-kit ligand, and fusions of GM-CSF and IL-3.
10. (Currently Amended) A method for producing an antigen-expressing dendritic cell population, comprising ~~produced by the process of~~ (a) contacting hematopoietic stem or progenitor cells with IL-18 in an amount sufficient to generate a dendritic cell population; (b) either (i) exposing the dendritic cells to an antigen-specific peptide or (ii) transfecting the dendritic cells with a gene encoding an antigen-specific peptide; (c) allowing the dendritic cells to process and express the antigen; and (d) purifying the antigen-expressing dendritic cells.
11. (Currently Amended) A method ~~dendritic cell population~~ according to claim 10 wherein step (a) of the process further comprises contacting the hematopoietic stem or progenitor cells with a molecule selected from the group consisting of GM-CSF, IL-4, TNF- α , IL-3, c-kit ligand, and fusions of GM-CSF and IL-3.

Claims 12-19 (Previously Canceled).